

Huntingdon Urban District Council.



REPORT

UPON THE SANITARY CONDITION

OF THE

BOROUGH of HUNTINGDON

FOR THE YEAR 1898,

BY

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MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH



PRESENTED TO THE COUNCIL JANUARY 26TH, 1899.



HUNTINGDON:
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1899.

To the
Huntingdon Urban District Council.

MY LORD AND GENTLEMEN,

I beg to present to you my report as to the Sanitary condition of your Borough during the year 1898.

Births and Deaths.

The births of 113 children have been registered, 45 males and 68 females, making an average birth rate of 27·0 per 100 persons living. Two of these births took place in the Union Workhouse.

The deaths of 85 persons were registered, 55 occurring in the Borough of Huntingdon, 15 in the County Hospital, and 15 in the Union Workhouse. Two deaths in the County Hospital and 6 in the Union Workhouse occurred in persons belonging to the Borough, bringing the number of deaths for the Borough up to 63, an average of 13·8 per 1000 persons living.

Thirteen deaths occurred in children under one year of age, making an infant mortality of 126·1 per 1000 births registered, of these 13 deaths, 5 were from debility from birth, 4 Bronchitis, 3 Diarrhoea, and 1 from Whooping Cough.

Prevalence of Zymotic Disease.

22 cases of Infectious disease have been notified to me during the year. 21 cases of Scarlet Fever, and one of Diphtheria.

Enteric Fever.

No case of Enteric Fever has occurred during the year.

Scarlet Fever.

Twenty-one cases of Scarlet Fever were notified during the year. The first case on January 16th; this case could not be clearly traced, but Scarlet Fever was still prevalent, there being two cases in the Spring House, and one in a private residence at the same time. The cases were of a mild type, and no doubt many children were so slightly affected that the parents did not think it necessary to call in Medical assistance, this led to the continuance of the disease throughout the year till the 4th of September, since which time no case has been notified. All these cases were removed at once to the Spring House, and all the residences were disinfected with Formic Aldehyde Gas under my direction and mostly under my own personal superintendence.

Erysipelas.

No case of Erysipelas occurred.

Measles.

There were a few cases of Measles in the spring and early summer, one of which proved fatal. It seems unnecessary to notify every case of Measles, and I regret that my suggestion of notifying first cases in each household, although approved by your Authority, has not at present been sanctioned by the Local Government Board.

Influenza.

A few cases of Influenza of a mild type occurred early in the year, and this led to the death of a person suffering from heart disease.

Diseases of the Respiratory Organs.

Nine deaths from Bronchitis, Pneumonia, and Pleurisy occurred during the year. Four of these were in children under 5 years of age.

Phthisis.

Six cases of Pulmonary Consumption and tubercular disease occurred during the year.

Cancer.

Six fatal cases of Cancer occurred during the year. Four in the Borough, one in the County Hospital, and one in the Workhouse.

Diarrhœa.

Six fatal cases of Diarrhœa occurred during the year, 5 of them in children under 5 years of age.

Small Pox and Vaccination.

No case of Small Pox has occurred for some years. Vaccination has been efficiently performed, and there has been no unwillingness on the part of parents to have their children vaccinated.

Re-vaccination is utterly neglected, and in the event of Small Pox being imported there would be the risk of a serious outbreak.

Means of preventing Infectious Diseases.

The Spring House has done excellent service during the year, and has no doubt been the means of preventing a serious outbreak of Scarlet Fever.

I am informed that a caretaker has been appointed to the Isolation Hospital, so generously presented to the Borough by Mr. Fielden, and that it will very soon be ready for the reception of cases of infectious diseases.

At the request of Mr. Fielden, I consented to superintend the furnishing of the Hospital Wards and Kitchens. I found that the Hospital was planned to contain 12 beds, and as I thought the accommodation would be hardly sufficient for our requirements, I asked him to allow me to substitute 12 cots for 6 of the beds, which he agreed to at once, so that there will now be accommodation for 18 cases.

I visited the Isolation Hospital at Kettering, a well equipped Hospital, and having all the modern requisites for the treatment of Infectious cases. I was most courteously met by Mr. Dryland, Medical Officer of

Health, of Kettering and Medical Superintendent of the Isolation Hospital, who conducted me to the Hospital, and introduced me to Miss Lanyon, the Matron, who most kindly supplied me with all the information I required to guide me in carrying out the task I had undertaken.

I hope your Authority will not see your way to the admission of cases from distant towns and villages to the Isolation Hospital, as it seems hard on the Inhabitants of Huntingdon that we should have cases sent into our midst, when we are, as at the present time, free from Infectious disease.

I think it would be desirable to extend the privilege to St. Peter's Hill, and I should see no reason to exclude Godmanchester if our accommodation were sufficient, on the other hand, it would be hard on Huntingdon, as the gift was accepted for the Borough only, to have the building filled with patients belonging to Godmanchester, and to find the Huntingdon people excluded in consequence.

I hope your Authority will make arrangements for the isolation of cases of Small Pox at some place a greater distance from the Town. The Spring House might do for an emergency, but from our more recent knowledge of the distance the contagion of Small Pox travels, I do not think it desirable to keep it permanently for this purpose.

Cases of Small Pox should be treated at a distance of not less than half-a-mile from any collection of dwelling houses.

Disinfection.

There is an excellent disinfecting apparatus at the New Isolation Hospital, which could be used for the disinfection of bedding and clothing of persons residing in the Borough.

The disinfection of the houses in which Scarlet Fever occurs could still be effected with the Formic Aldehyde Lamp in possession of your Authority.

Water.

The Water Supply of the Borough is obtained from the gravel of the Ouse Valley, and is collected by pipes and conveyed into a well, from which it is pumped into a reservoir and distributed over the town by gravitation ; there is also a high pressure service to supply some of the houses which stand on high levels. The service to the town generally is constant.

During the recent flood some turbidity has still been noticed in the water, but I hope this can be easily remedied, and the matter is now receiving your attention.

The gathering ground in which the pipes are laid is far removed from any means of contamination from sewage pollution, or from the soakage of manurial products.

I appreciate the authority you have given me in the matter of analysing the town supply of water once during the year. I did not avail myself of it during the past year, as recently a private analysis of the water was made, and found most satisfactory.

A few wells remain in the town, but I hope they will soon all be done away with. Three analyses of well water were made during the year ; in two of these the water was condemned and the wells closed, the remaining one the water was not of high-class purity, but not considered unfit for drinking purposes.

I am constantly by notices and otherwise urging all persons using well water to have it thoroughly boiled before use for drinking purposes.

Sewerage and Sewage Disposal.

The sewers are on the whole in a good condition and are repeatedly flushed. They have been well ventilated, but I would recommend a regular inspection of all the ventilators at least once during the year. The sewer discharges direct into the river without any kind of treatment being adopted to deal with the sewage ; this is now engaging the attention of your Authority. I would

again call your attention to the outlet of the sewer at Newtown, which is in a very bad condition.

Removal of Refuse.

This is well carried out, your Authority possessing men, horses and carts of your own.

Pollution of Streams and Water-courses.

All the streams and water-courses in the district are more or less liable to pollution.

Premises regulated by the Sanitary Authority.

Factories and Workshops are not inspected, but I believe them to be in a good condition.

Schools are regularly inspected.

Slaughter Houses are regularly inspected by your Inspector of Nuisances, and are generally in a good condition.

Dairies, Cow Sheds, and Milk Shops.— These are regularly inspected.

Food Adulteration.

No samples of food have been sent for analysis during the year.

House Sanitation.

Your Inspector of Nuisances is continually on the alert and makes almost daily inspection of houses and premises.

Several old houses have been pulled down and new ones erected in their stead.

Old-fashioned and improper drain traps are gradually being replaced by earthenware gully traps.

The flushing of water closets in the poorer class of houses is not in a satisfactory condition. This matter mentioned in my last report has been considered by your

Authority, and is now under the consideration of the Local Government Board. I should advise the adoption of the ash pail closet system, and the regular removal of the excreta by your Authority when possible. Some field ought to be provided for the disposal of excreta, where there would be no likelihood of any water supply being polluted.

Bye-Laws.

Your Authority possesses Bye-Laws relating to the cleansing of Footways, Pavements, Earth Closets, Privies, Cesspools, &c.; also relating to Common Lodging Houses, and Slaughter Houses.

The Notification of Diseases Act has been in force since 1890, and the Infectious Diseases Prevention Act since 1891.

Public Mortuary.

This matter is now under the consideration of your Authority.

General Sanitation.

I inspected the whole district in December last with the Inspector of Nuisances, Mr. Beresford, and found things generally in a good condition. I think more care should be exercised in paving and gravelling the yards at the back of the dwelling houses, your Inspector has this matter in hand, and thus no doubt some improvement will be effected.

I have also made several special inspections as occasion has arisen for my doing so.

I enclose Table A of deaths during the year 1898, and B of Population, Births, and new cases of infectious diseases.

I have the honour to remain, My Lord and Gentlemen,
Your obedient Servant,

HERBERT LUCAS,
Medical Officer of Health.

Sanitary Inspector's Report :—

I beg to report that during the past year I have examined and inspected the Sanitary conditions and arrangements of the Town under my jurisdiction with the following result :—

There were 14 *House Drains* stopped, and upon the usual notices being served were immediately attended to.

11 *Closets* were defective, and in several cases they were entirely stopped up. Notices in each case were given to the Owners or Agents, and the defects were immediately remedied.

With regard to the *Dairies* and *Cow Sheds*, I found the utensils of the Dairies kept very clean, and the Cow Sheds clean and in good sanitary condition.

Bakehouses. I have inspected these at various times, and in every case found them very clean, and the kneading troughs and other utensils in excellent order.

Slaughter Houses I have visited frequently, and found them generally in fair condition, except in one case, viz., Mr. Arthur Smith's premises, where I discovered the overflow from the cess-pool running into an open ditch, upon my remonstrating with him, he at once made the defect good to my satisfaction, and disinfected the place.

The Nuisance is now entirely abated by reason of his having cut off the connection from the cess-pool.

Complaints were made with respect to the pigs kept by him, this Nuisance has likewise been entirely abated, and he has shewn every desire to assist the Sanitary Authority in abating any Nuisance which might arise in respect of his Slaughter House, or the keeping of pigs on his premises.

In the *Orchard Lane* Allotments I found two pigstyes in a very dirty condition, and I at once gave notice to the tenants, and they took the necessary steps to cleanse and disinfect the styes to my satisfaction, and I have had no complaint since, in fact the tenants were ever ready to carry out any instructions I gave to them to stop and prevent any Nuisance which might arise by reason of their keeping pigs there.

In the month of October last, from information I received, I inspected the premises of Mr. James Sharp, in Hartford Road, and found them in a filthy condition, so much so, that I felt it incumbent upon me to give him 48 hours' notice to abate the Nuisance, which he immediately attended to, and I have made frequent visits since, and have had no cause to complain.

In conclusion, I may say from my daily inspection, that I have found the general Sanitary arrangements of the Town to be in a very satisfactory condition, and I have had less cause of complaints to make during the past year than I have had on previous occasions.

K²³. **(A.)** *TABLE OF DEATHS during the Year 1898, in the Huntingdon Urban District, classified according to DISEASES, AGES, AND LOCALITIES.*

NAMES OF LOCALITIES adopted for the purpose of these Statistics; public institutions being shown as separate localities. <i>(Columns for Population & Births are in Table B.)</i>	MORTALITY FROM ALL CAUSES, AT SUBJOINED AGES.						MORTALITY FROM SUBJOINED CAUSES, DISTINGUISHING DEATHS OF CHILDREN UNDER FIVE YEARS OF AGE.													
	At all ages.	under 1 year.	1 and under 5	5 and under 15	15 and under 25	25 and under 65	65 and up- wards													
									Enteric or Typhoid Fever.	Puerperal Fever.	Measles.	Whooping Cough.	Diarrhoea and Dysentery.	Phthisis.	Bronchitis, Pneumonia, and Pleurisy.	Heart Disease.	Influenza.	Injuries.	All other Diseases.	TOTAL.
HUNTINGDON	55	13	5	2	4	14	18	Under 5 5 upwds.			1	1	5	6	4	8		1	7	18
COUNTY HOSPITAL.....	15	0	2	1	2	7	3	Under 5 5 upwds.			1		1		2	3		3	5	2
WORKHOUSE.....	15	0	0	0	0	3	12	Under 5 5 upwds.								2			13	15

K²¹¹. **TABLE OF POPULATION, BIRTHS, & OF NEW CASES OF INFECTIOUS SICKNESS,**
coming to the knowledge of the Medical Officer of Health, during the Year 1898, in the Huntingdon
(B.) *Urban District; classified according to DISEASES, AGES, AND LOCALITIES.*

NAMES OF LOCALITIES adopted for the purpose of these Statistics; Public Institutions being shown as separate localities.	POPULATION AT ALL AGES.		Registered Births.	Aged under 5 or over 5.	NEW CASES OF SICKNESS IN EACH LOCALITY COMING TO THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH.		NUMBER OF SUCH CASES RE- MOVED FROM THEIR HOMES IN THE SEVERAL LOCALITIES FOR TREATMENT IN ISOLA- TION HOSPITAL.
	Last Census.	Estimate ¹ to middle of 1893.			Scarlatina.	Diphtheria.	
HUNTINGDON	4346	4546	111	Under 5 5 upwards.	4 17 1	4 17
HOSPITAL				Under 5 5 upwards.			
WORKHOUSE.....			2	Under 5 5 upwards.			
TOTALS			113	Under 5 5 upwards.	4 17 1	4 17

State here whether “ Notification of Infectious Disease ” is compulsory in the District,—Yes. Since when ? 1890.
 Besides the above mentioned Diseases, insert in the columns with blank headings the names of any that are notifiable
 in the District, and fill the columns accordingly. State here the name of the Isolation Hospital used by the sick of the
 District. Mark (H) the Locality in which such Hospital is situated ; and if not within the District, state where it is
 situated—SPRING HOUSE, SITUATED ON SPRING COMMON.

*Area and Population of the District or Division
to which this Return relates.*

Area in Acres - - - 976

Population (last census) - - 4346

„ Estimated to middle } 4546
 of 1898.

Death Rates.	{	General	.13.8	{	per 1000 Population esti- mated to middle of 1898.
		Infant (un- der 1 year of age)	- 126.1		{